

The President's Radio Address *September 30, 2006*

Good morning. Today I want to talk to you about a matter of national security that has been in the news, the National Intelligence Estimate on terrorism. The NIE is a classified document that analyzes the threat we face from terrorists and extremists. Parts of this classified document were recently leaked to the press. That has created a heated debate in our Nation's Capital and a lot of misimpressions about the document's conclusions. I believe the American people should read the document themselves and come to their own conclusions, so I declassified its key judgments.

The National Intelligence Estimate confirms that we are up against a determined and capable enemy. The NIE lists four underlying factors that are fueling the extremist movement: first, longstanding grievances such as corruption, injustice, and a fear of Western domination; second, the jihad in Iraq; third, the slow pace of reform in Muslim nations; and fourth, pervasive anti-Americanism. It concludes that terrorists are exploiting all these factors to further their movement.

Some in Washington have selectively quoted from this document to make the case that by fighting the terrorists in Iraq, we are making our people less secure here at home. This argument buys into the enemy's propaganda that the terrorists attack us because we are provoking them. Here is what Prime Minister Tony Blair said this week about that argument: "This terrorism isn't our fault. We didn't cause it. It's not the consequence of foreign policy." Prime Minister Blair is right. We do not create terrorism by fighting terrorism. The terrorists are at war against us because they hate everything America stands for and because they know we stand in the way of their ambitions to take over the Middle East. We are fighting to stop them from taking over Iraq and turning that country into a

safe haven that would be even more valuable than the one they lost in Afghanistan.

Iraq is not the reason the terrorists are at war against us. Our troops were not in Iraq when terrorists first attacked the World Trade Center in 1993 or when terrorists blew up our Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania or when they bombed the *USS Cole* or when they killed nearly 3,000 people on September the 11th, 2001. Five years after the 9/11 attacks, some people in Washington still do not understand the nature of the enemy. The only way to protect our citizens at home is to go on the offense against the enemy across the world. When terrorists spend their days working to avoid capture, they are less able to plot, plan, and execute new attacks on our people. So we will remain on the offense until the terrorists are defeated and this fight is won.

In my recent speeches, I've said we are in the early hours of a long struggle for civilization and that our safety depends on the outcome of the battle in Iraq. The National Intelligence Estimate declares, quote, "Perceived jihadist success there would inspire more fighters to continue the struggle elsewhere." It also says that, quote, "Should jihadists leaving Iraq perceive themselves, and be perceived, to have failed, we judge fewer fighters will be inspired to carry on the fight."

Withdrawing from Iraq before the enemy is defeated would embolden the terrorists. It would help them find new recruits to carry out even more destructive attacks on our Nation, and it would give the terrorists a new sanctuary in the heart of the Middle East, with huge oil riches to fund their ambitions. America must not allow this to happen. We are a nation that keeps its commitments to those who long for liberty and want to live in peace. We will stand with the nearly 12 million Iraqis who voted

for their freedom, and we will help them fight and defeat the terrorists there so we do not have to face them here at home.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:55 a.m. on September 29 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m.

on September 30. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on September 29 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. In his address, the President referred to Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Statement on Senate Confirmation of Mary E. Peters as Secretary of Transportation

September 30, 2006

I am pleased that the Senate swiftly confirmed Mary Peters as Secretary of Transportation.

Mary is an innovative thinker who will work with State and local leaders to confront challenges and solve problems. I look forward to working with her to reduce highway and aviation congestion, modernize

our Nation's infrastructure, and increase the efficiency of travel in our country. Her leadership will enable the Department to maintain a safe, reliable, and efficient transportation system.

I congratulate Mary and her family on her confirmation and thank her for her service to our Nation.

Statement on Congressional Passage of Legislation Supporting Iran's Freedom

September 30, 2006

My administration is working on many fronts to address the challenges posed by the Iranian regime's pursuit of weapons of mass destruction, support for terrorism, efforts to destabilize the Middle East, and repression of the fundamental human rights of the citizens of Iran. We are engaged in intense diplomacy alongside our allies and have also undertaken financial measures to counter the actions of the Iranian regime.

I applaud Congress for demonstrating its bipartisan commitment to confronting the Iranian regime's repressive and destabilizing activities by passing the Iran Freedom Support Act. This legislation will codify U.S. sanctions on Iran while providing

my administration with flexibility to tailor those sanctions in appropriate circumstances and impose sanctions upon entities that aid the Iranian regime's development of nuclear weapons.

I applaud the efforts of Chairman Richard Shelby, Ranking Member Paul Sarbanes, Rick Santorum, and Bill Nelson in the Senate and Chairman Henry Hyde, Ranking Member Tom Lantos, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, and Gary Ackerman in the House. I look forward to signing this bill into law, which will facilitate America's support for the Iranian people in their efforts to build a just, free, and peaceful society.

NOTE: The statement referred to H.R. 6198.